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ACTION INL-00

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| INFO | LOG-00 | NP-00 | ACQ-00 | CIAE-00 | DEAE-00 | DODE-00 | WHA-00 |
| | SRPP-00 | DS-00 | EAP-00 | OIGO-00 | UTED-00 | VC-00 | H-01 |
| | TEDE-00 | INR-00 | IO-00 | LAB-01 | VCE-00 | AC-01 | NEA-00 |
| | DCP-01 | NSAE-00 | OIC-02 | ACE-00 | SSO-00 | SS-00 | TEST-00 |
| | USIE-00 | EPAE-00 | DSCC-00 | DRL-02 | NFAT-00 | SAS-00 | /008W |
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O 191933Z APR 02
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8266
DIRONDCP WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USCINCSO MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE
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DEPT FOR INR/R/MR, WHA/AND WHA/PDA INL/PC
ONDCP FOR PA
USCINCSO FOR PA
EMBASSIES FOR IO

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KMDR OPRC PREL SNAR PGOV CO
SUBJECT: MEDIA PLAY/REACTION: PASTRANA'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON, VENEZUEL
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MIDDLE EAST

1. PRESIDENT PASTRANA'S 4/18 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BUSH LED COLOMBIA PRINT AND ELECTRONIC NEWS COVERAGE ON 4/19. THE LEAD STORY IN COLOMBIA'S FOREMOST DAILY, BOGOTA-BASED "EL TIEMPO," WAS ENTITLED, "BUSH AND PASTRANA AGAINST HUGO CHAVEZ" AND CARRIED THE HEADER, "THEY CRITICIZE CENSORSHIP OF THE VENEZUELAN PRESS." THE ARTICLE'S SUBTITL READ, "PASTRANA DEMANDS ANSWERS CONCERNING THE FARC IN VENEZUELA. RANGEL SAYS [THE GOV] HAS NO INFORMATION THAT THEY ARE IN THE COUNTRY "EL TIEMPO" CITED PRESIDENT BUSH AS "ROUNDLY DENYING [THE U.S.'] PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSPIRACY LEADING TO THE COUP AGAINST CHAVEZ." INSIDE COVERAGE OF THE BUSH-PASTRANA MEETING, UNDER THE HEADER "VENEZUELA/THEY CRITICIZE GOVERNMENT ACTIONS PRECEDING THE COUP," REPORTED

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THE TWO LEADERS "JOINED VOICES YESTERDAY IN CRITICIZING VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT ACTIONS THAT GAVE RISE TO THE RECENT COUP ATTEM AND [VENEZUELA'S] SUPPOSED TOLERANCE OF THE FARC."

2. EL TIEMPO REPORTED LESS PROMINENTLY, UNDER THE HEADLINE "BUSH PROMISES TO HOLD UP HIS END AGAINST TERRORISM," PRESIDENT BUSH'S COMMITTING THE U.S. TO CARRYING ITS FAIR SHARE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM AND HIS REITERATING THE ADMINISTRATION'S DESIRE TO BROADEN COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND COLOMBIA THROUGH A "ROBUST" ATPA. MEDELLIN-BASED REGIONAL DAILY "EL COLOMBIANO'S" DOMESTICALLY FOCUSED COVERAGE OF THE BUSH-PASTRANA MEETING RAN UNDER THE HEADLINE, "BUSH TAKES A HARDER LINE AGAINST THE FARC AND AUC." CALI-BASED REGIONAL DAILY "EL PAIS" CARRIED ITS WIRE COVERAGE OF THE MEETING UNDER THE HEADLINE, "COLOMBIA CAN DEFEAT TERRORISTS."

3. RADIO/TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE PASTRANA VISIT WAS
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STRONGLY POSITIVE, UNDERSCORING THE VALUE OF INCREASINGLY INSTITUTIONALIZED CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND COLOMBIAN HEADS OF STATE. THE INFLUENTIAL RADIO PROGRAM "LA FM" SAID THE VISIT WAS WELL-TIMED AND H ELICITED IMPORTANT CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR PASTRANA'S AGENDA. BOTH RCN AND CARACOL NOTED THE CENTRALITY OF PASTRANA'S ATPA MESSAGE AND PRESIDENT BUSH'S FIRM RECOMMITMENT TO ENHANCED TRADE TIES.

4. ON VENEZUELA, A SIDEBAR TO "EL TIEMPO'S" COVERAGE OF THE BUSH- PASTRANA MEETING ENTITLED, "HARSH REPORT BY THE OAS," CITED OAS FINDINGS THAT "IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE [GOV] COMMIT ITSELF TO REJECTING MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS" AND REPORTED THAT THE O MISSION HAD "RECEIVED COMPLAINTS ABOUT CHAVEZ SUPPORTERS (KNOWN AS BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES) WHOM MANY HAD ACCUSED OF VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS, COMMITTING ACTS OF INTIMIDATION, AND LOOTING." A CONTINUATION OF YESTERDAY'S ARTICLE ENTITLED, "HERE'S HOW THE COUP AGAINST CHAVEZ FAILED," IDENTIFIED GENERAL VASQUEZ VELASCO HAS HAVING PLAYED A DECISIVE ROLE WHEN, "DISGUSTED BY [INFLUENCE WIELDED BY YOUTHFUL OIL MILLIONAIRE ISAAC] PEREZ, THE ARMY CHIEF WITHDREW SUPPORT FOR CARMONA

MEDIA REACTION

5. AN OP-ED IN "EL TIEMPO" (4/19) BY NATIONAL UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR ALEJO VARGAS VELASQUEZ UNDER THE HEADLINE "LESSONS FOR COLOMBIA," STATED: "ONE SEES IN THE VENEZUELAN CRISIS THE NEED TO HAVE STABLE, SERIOUS, AND CREDIBLE POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS SINCE NEITHER BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS, UNIONS, NOR RELIGIOUS

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ORGANIZATIONS [CAN TAKE THEIR PLACE]. THERE IS, IN VENEZUELA'S
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CASE, AN APPARENT TENSION BETWEEN DEMOCRACY ... AND GOVERNABILITY
THAT RESPONDS TO THE [EXERCISE] OF POWER."

6. LEAD EDITORIAL IN "EL TIEMPO" (4/19) UNDER THE HEADLINE "WITH
EMPTY HANDS," STATED: "THE EFFORTS OF SECRETARY OF STATE POWELL [IN
THE MIDEAST], LIKE THOSE OF VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY SEVERAL
WEEKS AGO, HAVE PROVEN FRUITLESS ... IT'S UNCLEAR TO WHAT EXTENT
RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS HAVE ERODED THE BASIS FOR A POSSIBLE SOLUTION
TO THE CONFLICT. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CIRCLE
BEFORE VIOLENCE ON BOTH SIDES LEADS TO ANOTHER WAR, SURELY MORE
TERRIBLE THAN THE PREVIO ONES. ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS MUST
UNDERSTAND, ONCE AND FOR ALL, THAT THEY ARE DESTINED TO COEXIST
AS NEIGHBORS." ELLIS *

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